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1990/05/16

~~SECRET~~

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INQUIRE=DOC10D
ITEM NO=00770369

ENVELOPE

CDSN = LGX337 MCN = 90136/06646 TOR = 901360440
PTTSZYUW RUEKJCS4704 1360436 ~~SSSS~~ RUEALGX.
ZNY ~~SSSS~~

HEADER

P 160436Z MAY 90
FM JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
INFO RUEALGX/SAFE
P 151739Z MAY 90
FM DIA WASHINGTON DC//JSI-6A//
TO DIACURINTEL
RUVESLA/USCINCSpace PETERSON AFB CO//J2/DIA REP//
RUEAUSA/CDRUSASDC WASHINGTON DC
AIG 7011
AIG 7046
AIG 7036

BT

CONTROLS

~~SECRET~~ NOFORN

SERIAL: DODID 135-2A

BODY

SUBJ: CHINA-SYRIA: NUCLEAR COOPERATION. ~~(C/NF)~~

DOI: 15 MAY 90 (AS OF 1143 EDT)

TEXT: 1. ~~(S/NF)~~ BEIJING AND DAMASCUS REPORTEDLY SIGNED AN AGREEMENT LAST MONTH FOR CHINA TO PROVIDE SYRIA WITH A 3-MEGAWATT REACTOR FOR R&D.

2. ~~(S/NF)~~ WHETHER THE REACTOR WILL BE USED FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING BY SYRIA'S CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH OR BY THE COUNTRY'S ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION IS UNCLEAR, [REDACTED]

3. ~~(S/NF)~~ COMMENT: HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE FINANCED IS STILL UNCERTAIN. CONSIDERING SYRIA'S FISCAL CONSTRAINTS AND BEIJING'S DESIRE TO RECEIVE HARD CURRENCY AT THE TIME OF DELIVERY, THE DEAL MAY HAVE SOME PROBLEMS. LAST NOVEMBER CHINA AND PAKISTAN ANNOUNCED AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH BEIJING WOULD PROVIDE ISLAMABAD WITH A 300-MEGAWATT NUCLEAR POWER STATION. THAT DEAL NOW SEEMS IN JEOPARDY BECAUSE CHINA IS INSISTING ON HARD CURRENCY.

4. ~~(S/NF)~~ EVEN IF A FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT IS WORKED OUT, SYRIA WILL PROBABLY NOT RECEIVE THE REACTOR FOR AT LEAST A YEAR OR MORE. NONETHELESS, THE REACTOR IS APPARENTLY TOO SMALL TO MAKE WEAPONS MATERIAL EXPEDITIOUSLY.

5. ~~(S/NF)~~ THIS AGREEMENT IS THE LATEST INDICATION THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN BEIJING AND DAMASCUS ARE CONTINUING TO EXPAND, ESPECIALLY REGARDING MILITARY TIES. FOR AT LEAST THE PAST YEAR, BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF CHINA PROVIDING MISSILES, INCLUDING THE M-9 SSM, TO SYRIA.

ADMIN

PREP: [REDACTED] JSI-3A, [REDACTED]

DECL: ~~OADR~~

~~SECRET~~

~~NOFORN~~